



## Wild Horse Planes

*By Fred Miller, Clark Fork Valley Press, reprinted with permission*

The brand new Penn Stohr Field airport in Plains took flight Saturday, October 7 with old-fashioned barnstorming, speeches by dignitaries, including Montana's Governor, several hundred spectators and airplanes, helicopters and pilots from miles around.

Contractor JTL Group Inc. recently finished the \$4 million project, which has space for larger aircraft than could not previously land. The dedication commemorated the end of almost two years of construction.

"Airport planning was stressful," Sanders County Commissioner Carol Brooker said. It was "a seven-year process that I didn't think would ever end."

The dedication allowed her, airport manager Randy Garrison and 500 to 600 spectators, a chance to unwind and marvel at the completed project.

The day began with a pancake breakfast at 8 a.m. put on by the Plains-Paradise Chamber of Commerce, who also cooked hamburgers for lunch. Students from Spring Creek Lodge Academy and Plains High School's Jobs for Montana Graduates class helped with parking and aircraft ground control.

Spectators gazed at homebuilt kit planes, small bombers, fire fighting and medical transport planes and other aircraft. Before the event ended at about 2 p.m., 77 airplanes and two helicopters had arrived, mostly from Montana and Idaho.

Penn Stohr Jr., son of Penn Stohr Sr., a Sanders County aviation pioneer and the airport's new namesake, came from Oregon to attend the dedication with his son and other family members. Stohr, a retired Evergreen International Aviation executive said his father used to fly the oldest plane on the tarmac, a Travel Air 6000; built in 1928.

Stohr used an identical plane to rescue the crew of a B-23 bomber that crashed in Idaho in sub-zero weather. Stohr crashed a Ford Tri-Motor plane near Helena and died in 1957. Josh Stohr, grandson of Penn Stohr Sr., said the plane at the airport had been crashed twice, but Hank Galpin, its owner and pilot, restored it.

Galpin took the Stohrs on a flight, but he also gave a ride to retired TWA captain Harry Smith, World War II Navy pilot



*Sanders County Commissioner Gail Brooker and Governor Brian Schweitzer were featured speakers at the dedication of the Penn Stohr Field.*

Don Coe of Plains and Eric and Millar Bryce, former Plains residents and long-time pilots who now reside in Missoula. Millar Bryce said Galpin executed a "side-slip," a seldom used maneuver that allows aircraft to lose altitude quickly and slow for landing.

"The passengers on board were amazed and pleased with the skill the pilot demonstrated with this maneuver," Bryce said.

A Single-Engine Air Tractor (SEAT) bomber, piloted by Minuteman Aviation employee Doug Hodges from Missoula, performed a water drop at about noon, then flew around the valley a couple more times before landing.

Gov. Brian Schweitzer landed about 1 p.m. Accompanied by his dog, Jag, Schweitzer mingled with the crowd for several minutes before sitting at the podium with Garrison, the Rev. Bob Nagy, who performed a benediction for the new facility, Clark Fork Valley Hospital CEO Margo Harrison, Brooker and county commissioner Gail Patton.

*continued page 4*

# Administrator's Column

**On-line applications:** MDT Aeronautics Division is happy to announce that for the first time airport sponsors can complete and submit an application for airport development loan and grant funds via the MDT website. The link can be found at: [http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/forms/airportaid\\_app.pdf](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/forms/airportaid_app.pdf). After submitting your application a confirmation e-mail will be sent to you acknowledging receipt of the application. It is hoped that the ease of completing the application and ability to submit on-line will assist airports. Any questions or comments please let me know.

**Another first:** Very soon participants interested in attending the Montana aviation conference will also be able to register and pay on-line! Patty Kautz continues to work extremely hard to make this happen. Stay tuned for more details with applicable link next month. Be sure to mark your calendar for March 1-3 and plan to attend the conference in Missoula.

**And more excitement:** The Aeronautics Division is in the process of updating/improving its MDT website. This has been a long time request from many users. With great efforts from the Aeronautics Division and Information Services Division staff we are happy to finally announce a release date next month.

**Montana Air Service:** Challenges and Opportunities. The air service study that is being undertaken by MDT with research being conducted by Wilbur Smith Associates will be complete in the next few weeks. Finalization of the report was delayed due to the drastic changes to Montana's air service in the last quarter of 2005. The report now reflects information current through June 2006. A formal presentation by Wilbur Smith Associates and its team is *tentatively* scheduled for December 12 at 1:00pm in the commission room at MDT headquarters. The public is invited to attend. Please e-mail or call the office to verify that nothing has changed prior to the presentation if you plan to attend.

**USDOT Secretary confirmed:** Mary Peters, was sworn in as the 15<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of Transportation at a ceremony late last month. Peters was most recently the former chief of the Federal Highway Administration and former Director of the Arizona Department of Transportation. The ceremony was attended by former Transportation Secretaries, Norman Y. Mineta, Rodney Slater and Jim Burnley. At the annual American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' Annual Meeting, Peters urged her longtime colleagues to be willing to think anew about the challenges in building, maintaining, and financing the transportation system. Peters said safety will remain her top priority.

"We've had successes," she noted, particularly in the area of aviation where 2.7 billion miles were flown in recent years without a U.S. aviation fatality – until a recent small-jet crash in Kentucky.

In Chicago, Peter's FAA Administrator Marion Blakey told an audience that the FAA funding system must be overhauled, "...we are faced with the need to change the system. Not tweak the system. Not massage it. I'm talking about something radical."

As reauthorization gets closer, it will be interesting to watch the proposals and negotiations as they take shape.



## *Montana and the Sky*

Department of Transportation

Brian Schweitzer, Governor

Jim Lynch, Director

Official monthly publication of the  
Aeronautics Division

Telephone - (406) 444-2506

Fax – (406) 444-2519

P.O. Box 200507

Helena, MT 59620-0507

<http://www.mdt.mt.gov/>

Debbie K. Alke, Administrator

**Aeronautics Board**

**Tricia McKenna, Chairman**

**Craig Denney, Member**

**William (Bill) Hunt, Jr., Member**

**Fred Leistiko, Member**

**Lonnie Leslie, Member**

**Roger Lincoln, Member**

**Chuck Manning, Member**

**John Rabenberg, Member**

**Ted Schye, Member**

## *Montana and the Sky*

Is published monthly

In the interest of aviation in the  
State of Montana.

Third Class postage paid at  
Helena, Montana 59604

Subscription: \$5 per year

**Editor:** Patty Kautz

# Calendar

**December 1** – Civil Air Patrols 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

[www.mtwg.cap.gov](http://www.mtwg.cap.gov).

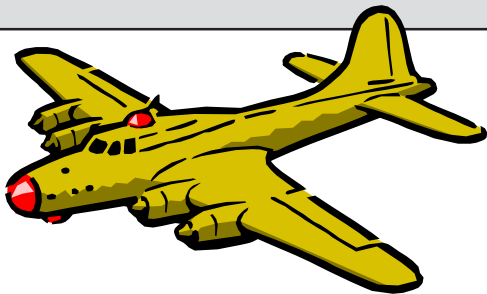
**January 19-21, 2007** – Surratt Memorial Winter Survival Clinic, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

**January 22-23, 2007** – AMAA Convention, Heritage Inn, Great Falls. For further information phone Boyd Morgan at (406) 388-4497.

**January 21, 2007** - Rocky Mountain College Aviation Program Open House – tours, flights, and questions answered for prospective students and parents. Call (406) 657-1060 for more information.

**February 16-17, 2007** – Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic, Helena. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.

**March 1-3, 2007** – Montana Aviation Conference, Hilton Inn, Missoula. For further information phone (406) 444-2506.



# Aviation Dictionary

**Airspeed:** Speed of an airplane. Deduct 25% when listening to a Navy pilot.

**Bank:** The folks who hold the lien on most pilots' cars.

**Engine Failure:** A condition which occurs when all fuel tanks mysteriously become filled with air.

**Glide Distance:** Half the distance from the airplane to the nearest emergency landing field.

**Hydroplane:** An airplane designed to land on a 20,000 foot long wet runway.

**IFR:** A method of flying by needle and ripcord.

**Parasitic Drag:** A pilot who bums a ride and complains about the service.

**Roger:** Used when you're not sure what else to say.

**Stall** - Technique used to explain to the bank why your car payment is late.

## Rocky Flight Team Places 3<sup>rd</sup> in Regions Competition

The Rocky Mountain College Flight Team placed third overall out of seven teams from a six-state area in the National Intercollegiate Flight Association regional competition held October 15 - 20. A team of 15 students placed third in flying events and third in ground events. The Top Team Award, sponsored by First Interstate Bank was the U. S. Air Force Academy, with Westminster College, from Salt Lake City, taking second.

The competition, hosted by Rocky included nine different events over five days. Students competed in both flying skills and ground knowledge. Flight events included navigation, precision landings, and message drop. Ground events include precision flight in a simulator, flight planning, aircraft preflight, and aircraft recognition. Students at collegiate aviation programs train year-round for the competition. Rocky's team was sponsored by Matheson Flight Extenders.

There were 80 students that took part in the competition, held at the Corporate Air facilities at the Billings Airport and on campus. Team Captain Morgan Schoepke, from Stevensville, took fourth place for the Top Pilot Award, which was sponsored by the Billings Chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association. He also placed second as the top male contestant in all events, with Top Ten medals in four events. Brandon Templeton placed eighth for Top Pilot, second in the simulator and earned three Top Ten medals. Jason Hill, and his pilot Lindsey Gray, took the number one spot in the message drop event.

Other students receiving medals for placing in the top ten in their events include Sean Curry (2<sup>nd</sup> in navigation), Connor Lockwood (3<sup>rd</sup> in navigation and 5<sup>th</sup> in computer accuracy), Justin Hess (3<sup>rd</sup> in navigation), Brad McLaughlin (5<sup>th</sup> in short field landing), Chris Salazar (3<sup>rd</sup> in aircraft recognition), Jessica Smith (4<sup>th</sup> in simulator), Matt Cichosz (5<sup>th</sup> in aircraft preflight) and Jason McDonald (8<sup>th</sup> in aircraft preflight). Other members of the team earning points and contributing to the great success include Sheena Hettick, Jacob Keierleber and Traase Lear.

The Intercollegiate Flight Team is one of many activities offered in Rocky's professional aviation program. Students graduate with flight training in advanced glass-cockpit aircraft and technologically advanced simulators ready for professional careers throughout the aviation industry.

Dan Hargrove, Director of Aviation said, "Students on our flight team have an added competitive advantage in their careers. They've learned even more about excellence, teamwork, and commitment. We're very proud of their hard work and success."



# Wild Horse Planes continued...

Plains VFW Post 3596 presented flags before speeches began, and Tom Bushlen, band instructor for Plains schools, performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" on tuba.

Garrison said the new runway, which is 4,650-foot by 75-foot runway (versus the old 3,000-feet by 50-foot runway) allows Life Flight planes to transport patients to far away facilities. The water drop showed that fire fighting planes can now haul full loads of water out of the airport. The airport should also lead to expanded business opportunities in Sanders County, he said.

Harrison said she could not express how important the airport is for the county's healthcare, "but I can tell you that it's actually going to save lives...There are times when air transport is imperative."

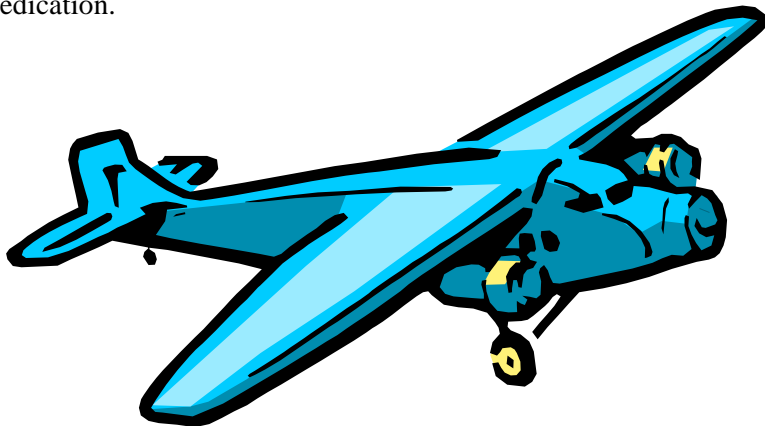
Rick Donaldson, who engineered the airport for Robert Peccia & Associates with Lance Bowser and Ryan Mitchell, said the project was "a bit of a marathon." Brooker thanked a long list of people, including Randy and Della Garrison, whom she said made the project possible.

Finally, Schweitzer took the microphone. He re-iterated his support for boosting energy production, such as wind power and clean coal in Montana, and said clean coal could create as many as 10,000 jobs in the state. As the economy grows in Montana, the airport could open the door to a lot of business opportunities, he said.

"I would caution you, though," Schweitzer said. Growth could strain local resources if the county is not prepared for it. "Plan for your future now, because if you don't plan for your future now, you won't be happy 20 years down the road."

As a Sanders County taxpayer—Schweitzer owns a ranch near Hot Springs—the governor said he is proud of the airport project. He has other ties to the county. His wife, Nancy, almost went to work for Lawyer Nursery before they married. About eight years ago, Schweitzer advised Andre Melief to buy Quinn's Hot Springs Resort. Schweitzer promised to return to Sanders County. A field representative for Sen. Conrad Burns read a statement of support for the project, and the day's activities ended with Schweitzer cutting the ribbon for the new airport with assistance from Brooker and Patton.

Garrison couldn't have been happier with the success of the dedication.



*Governor Brian Schweitzer had a chance to mingle with the crowd before heading back to Helena.*



*Hank Galpin's beautifully restored Travel Air 6000 originally built in 1928.*



*A delicious pancake breakfast that was put on by the Plains-Paradise Chamber of Commerce was enjoyed by all.*



# Conference Plans Underway - Fun For All!

Proving time really does “fly” by – plans are already underway for the 2007 Montana Aviation conference held in Missoula at the Hilton Garden Inn, March 1-3. This new top-of-the-line facility provides a conference center, large meeting rooms, luxurious sleeping rooms and delicious meals prepared by a world renowned chef from Chicago. The committee is also working on some top name speakers to make this year’s event a must see.

On Friday evening, the committee has come up with some entertainment that is an assured crowd pleaser. *The Singing Sons of Beaches* is a vocal trio from Flathead Lake. With acoustic guitar accompaniment and their Montana humor and charm, they have entertained publicly for over ten years. Steve Riddle, Greg Devlin and Nick Terharr comprise this entertaining and witty group and have been well received where ever they go!

*The Singing Sons of Beaches* was formed originally as a three piece acoustic guitar/vocal group that performed for families that attended the upscale dude ranches of western Montana near Flathead Lake. The group would perform around campfires while families enjoyed the Montana sunset, roasted marshmallows and sang renditions of Cum-BA-Yah.

The show is indigenous to the western states and the western state of mind. The trio sings about Montana, the people, and the communities. The group has become a favorite entertaining group sought after by those that have had the pleasure of their entertaining experience. *The Singing Sons of Beaches* have recently appeared as a special guest on the nationally televised Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon in Los Angeles, with the likes of Cher, Tony Bennett, Ed McMahon, and Jerry himself.

*The Singing Sons of Beaches* have never failed to create that successful event for their sponsors as they enjoy the personal conversations with their audiences and the laughter generated by their charm as an entertainment trio.

Steve Riddle is a Radiation Oncology Therapist, and a member of Montana’s legendary Mission Mountain Wood Band. Greg Devlin is a financial and investment banker as well as a member of the *Singing Sergeants*, the official chorus of the U.S. Air Force, who also appears as the solo tenor with *The Montana Symphony* and *Symphony Chorale*. Nick Terhaar from Miles City is a private finishing contractor and is the oldest of ten children. With a song list that numbers well over 1,000 songs, Terhaar leads this trio around as they perform at bonfires, banquets, parties, and concert halls.

When asked, the trio claims they never really came up with a name for their group but everyone that has experienced their music has said, “Boy these guys are some singing sons of beaches.”

Registration for this conference is still in the works with something new this year – the ability to register online! Stay tuned to next month’s newsletter for complete registration information.

Rooms have been blocked at the Hilton Garden Inn. Please call (406) 532-5300 to make reservations. Rooms have also been blocked at the following hotels within walking distance: Comfort Inn (406) 542-0888; Courtyard by Marriott (406) 549-5260; Hampton Inn (406) 549-1800; Super 8 (406) 549-1199. When making reservations reference MT Aviation conference. Reserve your room today, room blocks are only available until January 28, 2007.

So mark your calendar for this exciting event you won’t want to miss!



Friday Evenings Entertainment - The Singing Sons Of Beaches.

## Aviations Misunderstood Alphabet

Tower - Do you have Charlie? - Negative, we left him back at the hanger!  
Tower - Do you have Echo? - Negative, receiving you loud and clear!  
Tower - Do you have Hotel? - Negative, We are staying with friends!  
Tower - Do you have Mike? - Negative, I have a push-to-talk button and a headset!  
Tower - Do you have Oscar? - Negative, but I’m expecting a nomination this year!  
Tower - Do you have Papa? - Negative, but I wrote him a letter last week!  
Tower - Do you have Romeo? - Negative, Negative! Wherefore art thou Romeo?  
Tower - Do you have Uniform? - Negative, just jeans and sweatshirt!  
Tower - Do you have X-ray? - Negative, my doctor wants a CAT Scan!





# Montana winter flying, it is here!

By: Jeanne MacPherson, Chief, Safety and Education



*Bob Davis of Helena and his grandchildren enjoy some Montana winter flying!*

An insulated engine cover will help with preheating and if you make a stop, the insulated cover will help keep some of the engine heat in. An insulated cover doubles as a survival blanket or shelter. Pilots that fly regularly in the winter use wing covers to prevent frost, snow and ice from forming on the wing surface.

If the temperature is at or below freezing preheating the engine is essential. Without preheating there is stress and strain on the starter, battery and all the moving parts. The easiest way to prevent premature wear on the engine is to plug in an electric heating element that is installed on the engine, at least 2 hours before you depart. If you do not have an electric heating device installed there are other heaters such as propane heaters that warm the engine quickly. Remember the instruments and radios function better and last longer if they are warmed up too.

It is good practice to check the carbon monoxide emissions regularly; a carbon monoxide detector is the most inexpensive life insurance available.

Filling the fuel tanks after each flight helps reduce the possibility of the condensation of moisture that can contaminate fuel. In the winter, water droplets can freeze in the fuel tank.

Most survival experts teach us that survival gear is what we are wearing and what is in our pockets. With this in mind, wear warm gear and put three sources of fire starting in your pockets. Put your survival kit where it is accessible if you need to depart your airplane in a hurry.

I hope you get out and enjoy the beauty of winter and fly safe!

## Grand Opening Ceremony



*Chief Earl Old Person of the Blackfeet Nation was one of the dignitaries on hand to greet the crowd.*

The Montana scenery in the winter is splendid and in my opinion it is one of the best times of the year to fly. I am continuously awe struck when flying over the Bob Marshall Wilderness on a clear day when the mountains are cloaked in snow.

Our airplanes fly better when the air is cold and dense. The airplane engine has more effective horsepower than in the summer and the wings develop more lift. We take off in a shorter distance, climb better and cruise faster. And there are no bugs on the wind screen!

The biggest draw back of winter flying is that... it is cold out there! Yes, it is a challenge to get out with all the advanced preparation it takes to become airborne in the winter, but it is worth it.

A solution to a cold morning's preflight is a heated hangar. For those of us that do not have heated hangars there are ways to lessen the cold's effect on the airplane.

The Office of Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine formally opened the Great Falls Air Branch last month. This is the third of five new installations that will comprise the Department of Homeland Security Northern Border Air Wing. On the first snowy day of the year, a crowd gathered for the dedication at the branch hangar located on the Great Falls Airport. TSgt James Thoma, USAF sang a stunning rendition of the National Anthem and Major General Michael C, Kostlenik, Assistant Commissioner CBP Air and Marine, visiting from Washington DC, brought greetings from Secretary Michael Chertoff. Dennis Lindsay, Director Air Operations, welcomed the crowd. Earl Old Person, Chief Blackfeet Nation, gave an invocation during the ceremony. A static display of the branch aircraft was available for attendees, including a Citation jet, Blackhawk helicopter and Pilatus. Also on hand to provide remarks, were U.S. Senator Conrad Burns and Congressman Dennis Rehberg. U.S. Senator Max Baucus sent his regrets and congratulations via letter.

# Scholarship Opportunities

Montana is very fortunate to have many generous individuals and organizations that believe in promoting aviation by offering monetary assistance to qualified persons. The Aeronautics Division assists in administering some of these scholarships and encourages participation. The scholarships are offered to a Montanan to help defray costs of education (i.e., flight instruction, A&P, ect.) and will be presented during the 2007 Montana Aviation Conference in Missoula. Awarding of the scholarships will be based on a letter explaining the reasons for applying, future career goals, past aviation experience, if any, and any outstanding achievements. **The same letter can be submitted but applicant must submit one copy addressed to each individual scholarship they are applying for.** Letters of application should be sent to Montana Aeronautics Division, PO Box 200507, Helena, MT 59620-0507 or call (406) 444-2506 for further information. **Letters must be postmarked on or before January 26, 2007.**

**Harold Hamm Scholarship** – Harold and Zola Hamm were the anonymous donors that established the first \$250 A Love of Aviation (ALOA) Scholarship in 1993. With the passing of Harold on September 1, 2006, Zola decided to rename the scholarship the “Harold Hamm Scholarship” in honor of her husband of 19 years. Harold had an extremely strong passion for aviation. Together he and Zola completed two airplane projects: the restoration of a J-3 Piper Cub, and just this summer they finished building an experimental RV-6 aircraft.

**A Love of Aviation (ALOA) Scholarship** – An anonymous donor established this scholarship of \$250 in 1997.

**Morrison Aviation Appreciation Scholarship** – Jeff Morrison, retired former owner of Morrison Flying Service in Helena has established the \$300 scholarship as a token of appreciation to the aviation community.

**Montana Antique Aircraft Association (MAAA) Scholarship** – MAAA offers this \$500 scholarship to help defray the costs of flight instruction.

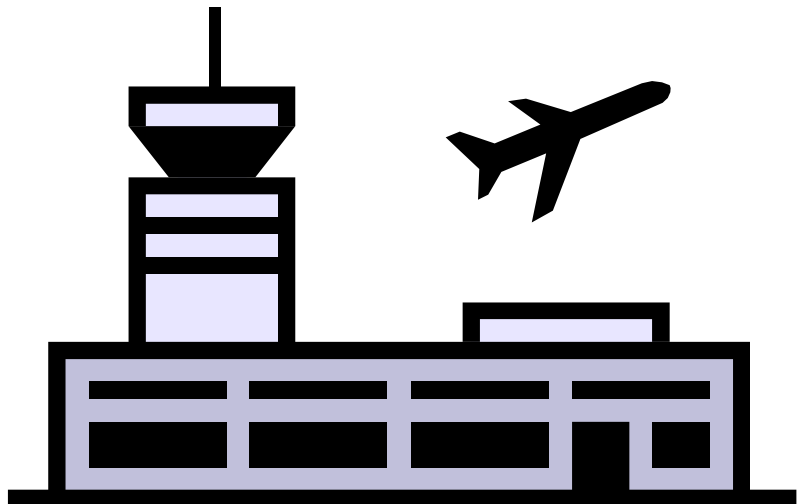
**Parrott Family Scholarship** – The Parrott Family offers this \$1,000 scholarship to be used over a one-year period for pilot training programs for students enrolled in the Rocky Mountain College (RMC) aviation program. The funds may be used for tuition in the RMC aviation program, and/or flight training expenses leading to a Private, Commercial, or Flight Instructor Certificate, and may include Instrument and Multiengine simulator training, and the purchase of aviation related materials and related supplies.

**AOM Flight Training Scholarship** – AOM has established this \$500 scholarship to financially assist a student pilot in obtaining their private pilot certificate.

**Montana Pilots Association Junior Pilot Award** – This recipient is chosen for outstanding interest in aviation, citizenship within their community and demonstrated academic achievement. The recipient must have soloed and be actively involved in flight training. This is a \$500 scholarship.

**Montana Pilots Association Flight Training Award** - This scholarship is open to a person who has a considerable interest in aviation. The \$500 scholarship is to be used for flight training.

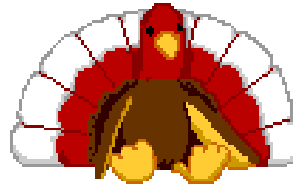
**Blue Goose First Generation Flight Scholarship** – This \$250 scholarship is awarded to a first generation pilot to assist with flight training. This scholarship is designed to assist a person who has a love of aviation, yet had limited exposure to aviation, someone from a non-aviation background/family.



# DC-3 On Display

The Museum of Mountain Flying is permanently displaying the restored DC-3 that flew in the now famous Mann Gulch fire. On August 5, 1949, a wildfire overran 16 firefighters in Mann Gulch on the Helena National Forest in Montana. Only three survived—the foreman and two members of an 18-man smokejumper crew that had parachuted into a small valley or gulch near the fire. These deaths were a shocking loss to the firefighters' families and friends. The tragedy was also a severe blow to the Forest Service, which had not experienced a fatality during a decade of smokejumping and was extremely proud of its elite firefighters. Repercussions from this incident were severe and long lasting.

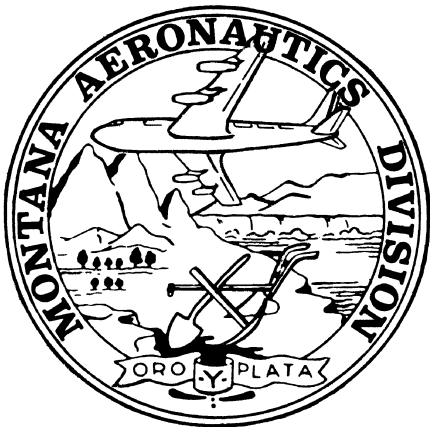
Last month a special ceremony was held at the museum to formally present this amazing display to the public. Financially backed by a handful of Missoula residents and businesses, the airplane was purchased for \$125,000 in 2001 and flown back to Missoula. Now after years of restoration this aircraft is on display for all to enjoy. Thanks to the Museum and all of its members for keeping this important part of history alive. What a wonderful memorial to our fallen smokejumpers.



## Happy Thanksgiving

MDT produces 2,700 copies of this public document at an estimated cost of 39 cents each, for a total cost of \$1,053. This includes \$200 for production, \$700 for postage and \$153 for printing.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program or activity of the Department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information call (406) 444-6331 or TTY (406) 444-7696.



## November 2006

Pre-Sort Standard  
US Postage Paid  
Helena, MT 59620  
Permit No. 141

PO Box 200507  
Helena, MT 59620-0507